(e) the intensive efforts made by Government for development of negelected districts?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SUNDAR LAL PATWA): (a) to (e) The information is being collected.

National Handloom Credit Fund

†3513. SHRI RAJ MOHINDER SINGH
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA

Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a demand has been made to Government for establishing a separate National Handloom Credit Fund to provide economic assistance to handloom industry;

(b) if so, the details of the demand;

(c) whether Government have so far taken decision in respect of the demand; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (d) No request has been made to the Government for setting up a National Handloom Credit fund. However, the High Powered Committee set up by Government of India under the Chairpersonship of Ms. Mira Seth, Member, Planning Commission, had recommended in its report in December, 1996 for creation of National Handloom Credit Fund for covering weavers outside the cooperative fold. The recommendation was made when NABARD's refinance facility was not available to the Weavers outside the Cooperative fold. This mater was taken up with NABARD and they have now extended this facility to State Handloom Corporations for covering weavers outside the cooperative fold from the year 1997-98.

Modernising textile industry

3514. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) The status of textile industry today in term of production, employment, exports and foreign exchange earnings; and

(b) the steps being taken to modernise textile industry?

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) The textile industry accounts for about 14% of manufacturing value added. It contributes to about one-third of India's export earnings and provides direct employment to about 38 million persons.

(b) The Ministry of Textiles has launched a Technolgy Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for textile and jute industries with the purpose of providing funds at competitive rates of interest to improve technology level of the textile industry. The Government has also launched a Technology Mission on Cotton (TMC) to improve production, productivity and quality of cotton. Besides, Government has initiated schemes for modernisation of loomage and providing training facilities in various Powerloom Service Centres for the benefit of powerloom sector. Various schemes for providing design support and development to the textile sector have also been initiated by the Government.

Promoting Production in cotton mills

3515. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) what steps are being taken by Government to promote the production in cotton mills in the country particularly in the State of Assam;

(b) if so, the details of such schemes; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF TEXTILES (SHRI GINGEE N. RAMACHANDRAN): (a) to (c) Government have taken several steps to promote the production in cotton mills in the country, including Assam. Some of these are as follows:—

(i) Government has launched a Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme (TUFS) for the Textile and Jute Industries, which is in operation since 1-4-1999 for a period of 5 years. Government funding is limited to reimbusement of interest at 5 per cent point on the interest charged by the lending agency on a project of technology upgradation in conformity with the scheme.

(ii) In order to increase the productivity and quality of cotton, the Government has launched a Cotton Technology Mission on Cotton Development, with objectives of research, dissemination of technology to farmers, improvement in marketing infrastructure and modernisation of Ginning & Pressing Factories. It would facilitate the availability of good quality of cotton as raw material.